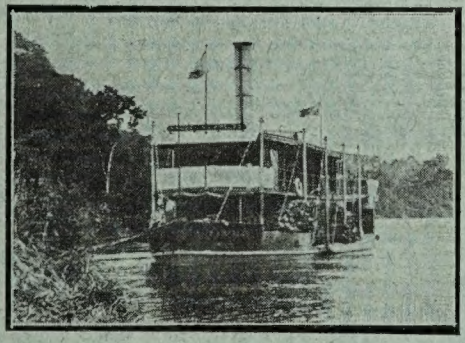
Parn-Africa Congo Martin, B. S. 100

DO YOU KNOW?

About Your Congo Mission

Mrs. Bessie Sentell Martin



THE "LAPSLEY"

From "In the Congo" by
H. F. Williams

2 CENTS EACH, 10 CENTS PER DOZEN

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOREIGN MISSIONS
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, U. S.,
NASHVILLE, TENN.

DO YOU KNOW?

OUR CONGO MISSIONS

H. F. WILLIAMS.

Our Congo Mission was opened in 1897. The estimated population of the field is 3,000,000. There are three stations—Luebo, the largest and headquarters of the Mission; Ibanche, about forty miles northeast of Luebo; and Mutoto, a new station, about one hundred and fifty miles southeast of Luebo.

In response to a request for a summary of the conditions and needs of the Congo Mission, Mrs. Bessie Sentell Martin wrote the editor of "The Missionary," giving, in condensed form, many items of interest. These facts, arranged in the form of answers to the question, "Do You Know?" supply a large amount of information "About Your Congo Mission." The leaflet, in view of the unparalleled interest in our Congo work at the Chattanooga Laymen's Missionary Convention, is timely. As great as have been the achievements of the gospel in Central Africa in the past history of our Congo Mission, we may be assured of larger conquests of the Cross in the near future. All who desire information about that part of the Dark Continent in which the Presbyterian Church, U. S., is especially interested, will find Mrs. Martin's "Do You Know?" a most helpful leaflet.

DO YOU KNOW?

ABOUT YOUR CONGO MISSION

CLIMATE AND SITUATION.

THAT we have a very pleasant climate. That the elevation of your mission stations here is about 2,000 feet. That the nights are cool enough to require blankets throughout the year. That the mornings and evenings are cool enough for wraps. That nearly all of your missionaries here wear woolens during both seasons of the year. That it often rains in the dry season, and is dry for days at a time during the wet months of the year.

That Luebo is situated on a long hill above the Lulua River, where the Luebo, a smaller river, flows into it. That these united waters connect us with the great Congo through its tributary, the Kassai. That Ibanche is in and about forty miles from Luebo. That high hills in the distance, palms and other beautiful tropical trees, cataracts, making passage up the Lulua beyond Luebo impossible, and waterfalls in the Luebo River, make magnificent scenery. That we have comparatively few illnesses and very good health, as a rule.

FOR THE PHYSICAL MAN.

That we have comfortable five-room "mud palaces" to live in (the framework of which, by the way, consists of stocks and strong vines, no nails being required, except for windows and doors, etc.). That we have delightfully cool spring water to drink. That among other vegetables, tomatoes, okra, beans, "cowpeas," sweet potatoes, egg-

DO YOU KNOW?

plant, corn, many kinds of "greens," rice and mushrooms are obtainable from the natives (all but the last named) during almost every month of the year That we have an abundance of bananas, plantains, limes, mangoes, pawpaws and pineapples during the entire year, with grapefruit and oranges in season.

That we can procure chickens for every day, with ducks, kid, mutton and wild game for special occasions.

BUILDINGS AND INDUSTRIAL DEPARTMENT.

That we have a printing office where sacred books (as fast as they can be translated into the native tongue), weekly Sunday school lessons and secular school books are printed. Where, also, during the first part of each year, our English periodical, the *Kassai Herald,* is printed.

That we have an administration building, with one room for a library; a larger one for evangelists' meetings, religious societies and large school classes. That we have a brick press with a capacity for making over 2,000 bricks per day.

That we have now of brick two storehouses for keeping barter goods and necessary supplies for our steamer, and a pharmacy where nearly fifty people are treated daily, besides the printing office and administration building. Also, one brick dwelling is almost completed.

ENCOURAGING VISIBLE RESULTS.

That there are now thousands of church members in this district of the Congo, and over a thousand Sunday school members meeting at one large church shed at Luebo,

DO YOU KNOW?

there being many other smaller church sheds, well attended by others of the congregation immediately in this vicinity.

That church services and catechumen classes are held daily. That church and Sunday school members learn all of their hymns "by heart" and sing them in a way that would put to shame many a church and Sunday school in the homeland.

That at morning prayers each member of the household, from the cook down to the smallest boy or girl, will lead in prayer without hesitation.

That there are from fifteen to thirty boys in each missionary's yard, to be taught and "fathered" by them, and not to be regarded as mere servants, but as pupils entrusted to their care for instruction.

That we have two homes for girls—The Pantops, at Luebo, where nearly sixty girls are now being trained, and the Maria Carey, at Ibanche, with about thirty Bakuba girls in attendance. That a thousand or more such girls and boys, representing as many villages, could be collected into other boarding schools, in an exceedingly short time, were there only the means and the men to undertake such work.

That the mission-trained children have already proven a wonderful power in spreading the Gospel to their people.

That Luebo and Ibanche are the centers of a vast out-station work where many thousands are being reached through the natives trained in their schools.

That one Luebo day school now has an attendance of over five hundred pupils, and that there is also a large school at Ibanche. That the attendance at both could be fore than doubled with a sufficient missionary force.

DO YOU KNOW?

That in two years' time,in some cases much less, pupils are advancing from illiterate heathendom to a stage where they can read Scripture lessons, and, in fact, anything printed in their tongue. Also in this time they learn to cipher and write creditably.

That, in addition to the other services mentioned, special weekly religious meetings are held for boys and girls, young and old women, for native "evangelists" or teachers, and those preparing to be teachers.

THE DARKER SIDE AND NEEDS.

And now for the side which does not seem so bright. However, with so many blessings, the few darker items are not mentioned in a complaining spirit, but merely to give a true picture of your mission here in Africa as it appears to one of its members. That because of climate and situation it is extremely dangerous for a foreigner, unprotected by a tropical helmet, to stand in the hot sun. That our nearest postoffice is five hundred miles away.

That mail is delivered by Belgian steamers only every three weeks, and is usually nearly or quite "three months old" by the time we receive it. That a letter from here to America usually takes two months to reach its destination, even in case good connections are made with steamers.

That all orders for provisions and household goods must be sent to England six months, at the very least, before such goods are needed.

That, on account of low water, the "Lapsley" can run only during the rainy season of the year—October 15th to May 15th.

D O Y O U K N O W ?

ABOUT BUILDINGS.

That nearly all furniture must be constructed of empty provision boxes or be "home-made" from native materials by a native carpenter.

That nearly all native building materials are exceedingly perishable because of hordes of destroying insects.

That because of this there is a great need for brick buildings to replace all of the present mud ones. Dozens of workmen are now continually employed making repairs.

That while the average wage for a native workman is only a dollar and fifty cents per month, it takes many to accomplish the work which one trained laborer in the homeland could finish in the same time.

That the very climate is against a "strenuous life" for the workman, and it is impossible to "hustle the East."

That white ants inhabit the walls of our buildings, keeping one on continual guard for all pictures, clothing, boxes, books, etc.; also disfiguring the walls so that they require frequent new coats of whitewash.

THE ONLY REAL HARDSHIPS.

That the necessary isolation and loneliness of this mission field should not be compared with the strain of seeing work of vital importance continually neglected through the sheer inability of our small force to give it adequate attention.

That each missionary is seriously hampered in the special work assigned him by having to divide his attention between his own and that of three or four others—who have not yet come!

DO YOU KNOW?

That, for instance, the missionary who has been given charge of the training of native evangelists and the supervision of our enormous out-station work has before him the pastoral or visitation work in our village of over 10,000 people, and a judge's work of settling all disagreements or other "palavers" among these poor "full-grown native children"—a work requiring the whole of every afternoon, except of Saturday and Sunday. Also, this same missionary has sermons to prepare daily for several months of the year, occasional translation to do, and last, but by no means least, he has to be prepared for any—may I say—emergency work which may fall to his lot. And as the "unexpected almost becomes the expected," as we say out here in Congo, unforeseen duties occupy a vast deal of a missionary's time.

That there is but one doctor for your missionaries at Luebo, Ibanche and Mutoto and the crowds of natives surrounding us. I may add that duties away from the station demanded the absence of this doctor for six months out of the twelve of the past year.

That it is the unanimous opinion of all of the medical authorities in Congo that a residence of over three years in this climate reduces one's capacity for work and endangers the health, and even the life in many cases, of the white man. Therefore the term of service assigned the agents of various Congo rubber companies is, in this climate, usually limited to three years, and on the West Coast to two years.

That the number of missionaries has been sadly inadequate, and several, at great risk, have stayed on the field long beyond the time furloughs are due.

That we are rejoicing in the assurance of needed reinforcements that will enable us to reap the great harvest ripe before us.

May God use these facts for his own glory!